

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: November 01, 2005

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-271-Bonneville-Alcoa: **Project #: V-O-06/01**)

to: Ed Tompkins
Natural Resource Specialist – TFO/LMT

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Bonneville-Alcoa Transmission Line Corridor from structure 75/3 to 101/1. Other transmission lines present within these corridors are the Bonn-North Camas No. 1, North Camas-Sifton No.1 and Alcoa-Felida No.1.

Location: Located in BPAs Olympia Region, the project area consists of two right of way segments between towers 1/6 and 38/4 and also between towers 38/4 and 41/6 along the Bonneville-Alcoa 115 kV transmission line corridor located in Clark and Skamania Counties, WA.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall growing and noxious vegetation from the right of way and access roads that may potentially interfere with the operation, maintenance, and reliability of the transmission lines. Unwanted, tall growing and noxious vegetation and danger trees will be removed and/or controlled inside the ROW using manual, mechanical, and herbicide treatment. Vegetation management work will occur along two right of way segments between towers 1/6 and 38/4 and also between towers 38/4 and 41/6 along the Bonneville-Alcoa 115 kV transmission line corridor. An estimated 282 acres within the Right-of-Way and 23 miles of access road will be managed.

Analysis: A Vegetation Management Checklist was completed for this project in accordance with the requirements identified in the Bonneville Power Administrations Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285).

BPA consulted with the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA) Forest Service and it was agreed that the proposed vegetation management activities are exempted from the current NSA management plan. See Chapter 7 General Policies and Guidelines (saving policies), Revisions to the Management Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area; Adopted April 27, 2004

Section 3 of the checklist identifies the natural resources present in the area of the proposed work. The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project area along with applicable mitigation measures.

Water Resources: Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area is listed in section 3.1 of the Vegetation Management Checklist. Trees in riparian zones will be selectively cut to include only those that are within 50 feet of the conductor at maximum sag. Trees will be topped where shrubs are not present to provide shade and a silt buffer.

As conservation and avoidance measures, only spot and basal treatment with Garlon 3A (Triclopyr TEA) will be used within a 100 foot buffer up to the waters edge of any stream containing threatened or endangered species. Danger Trees in riparian zones will be selectively cut to include only those that are within 50 feet of the conductor at maximum sag. Trees will be topped where shrubs are not present to provide shade and a silt buffer. Shrubs will not be cut that are less than 10 feet high where ground to conductor clearance is more than 50 feet. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams.

Threatened and Endangered Species/Essential Fish Habitat: Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act, BPA has made a determination of whether its proposed project will have any effects on any listed species. A species list from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was reviewed on October 20, 2005, identifying threatened and endangered species and Critical Habitat Units potentially occurring in the project area. This review also covered species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries. A determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species. A determination of "No Effect" was made for Essential Fish Habitat waters that occur in the project area.

Cultural Resources: No ground disturbing activities are planned for this project which may affect the cultural resources, however, if a site is discovered during the course of vegetation control, work will be stopped in the vicinity and the BPA Environmental Specialist, and the BPA archeologist will be contacted.

Monitoring: The entire project will be inspected during the work period. Additionally the line will be patrolled annually after treatment to monitor the effectiveness of the treatment and any issues associated with the project.

Findings: This Supplement Analysis finds that (1) the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285) and ROD, and; (2) there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. This Supplement Analysis also finds the proposed actions will not affect threatened or endangered species. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ John Howington

John Howington
Physical Scientist

CONCUR: /s/ James M. Kehoe for
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 11/3/2005

Attachment:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination